



Easy and Affordable Preparedness: Ten Actions for \$10

Be confident and safe in an emergency. Here are ten actions that take less than ten minutes and cost less than \$10!

Surviving the Shaking

1. Practice “Drop, Cover, Hold On.”



Free/
Low-cost



Kid-friendly



Easy

Did you know that standing in a doorway or running outside is *not recommended* during an earthquake? You are more likely to be injured by falling or flying objects than to die in a collapsed building. You’ll be safest under a strong piece of furniture that will protect you from flying objects.

TO DO NOW:

Practice taking cover like this:

- **DROP** to your hands and knees
- **COVER** your head and neck with your arms. Crawl for cover under a sturdy desk or table. Stay away from windows, outdoor walls, or anything that could fall on you.
- **HOLD ON** to your shelter. Stay sheltered for 30 seconds to simulate a real earthquake. Then slowly leave your shelter and call out to family members in other rooms. Move carefully because there could be an aftershock soon!

2. Remove Falling Hazards Over Beds and Play Areas.



Free/
Low-cost



Kid-friendly

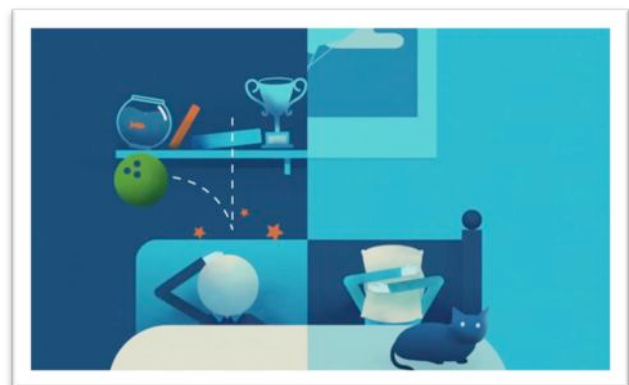


Easy

A simple way to improve the safety in your home is to move anything that can fall on a bed or play area during a quake.

TO DO NOW:

- Walk into each room of your home.
- Imagine the room is picked up by a giant and given a **huge** shake.
- What could fall on the bed or a play area? Heavy furniture, chimneys, vases & mirrors, shelves of books or toys, & art, big picture frames, or light fixtures? Move these items or reposition the beds for safety





Communicating with Family

3. Get in Touch with Your Out-of-Area Contact.



Free/
Low-cost



Kid-friendly



Easy

After a major disaster, local phone lines may be overloaded. Calls may get through to someone out-of-state when local lines are blocked. An out-of-area family member or friend can be in touch with everyone in your household. This way, you can find each other and know that everyone is safe!

Text if possible. Texts may go through even when phone lines can't handle voice calls. Texting also keeps phone lines open for 911.

Everyone in the family should know who the Out-of-Area Contact is (and that person should know their role in an emergency) and be prepared to call or text the contact with brief messages including:

- Where you are
- How you are
- What you plan to do next



Spend a few minutes setting up an Out-of-Area Contact now to gain peace of mind for your family in a real emergency!

TO DO NOW:

- Contact your Out-of-Area Contact with a brief message, preferably a text message if you are able to send texts. Be sure to clearly state that this is an exercise. Here is an example:

THIS IS AN EXERCISE. All four of us are OK and at home. We are staying home tonight.

If you do not have a mobile phone to text, or if the mobile doesn't work, get in touch using a landline, pay phone, or any other way you can. Borrow a phone if you need to. There's no way to know which forms of communication will work, so think now about having a variety of options.

- Post the Out-of-Area Contact information by every phone in your home.
- Make sure all family members have the phone number in their wallets or backpacks.
- If you do not have an Out-of-Area Contact, now is the time to choose one! Call and/or email the person you think will be best to relay information about you to other members of your family. Explain to them their role in an emergency, and get their agreement. Now send a test message.



4. Make Emergency Communication Cards.



Free/
Low-cost



Kid-friendly



Easy

If an earthquake took place on a Thursday at 6 pm, where would you be? Where would your children be? What about a Tuesday at 10 am? An emergency communication card provides important phone numbers and meeting place information for loved ones to stay connected and be reunited.

TO DO NOW:

Download and fill out the Emergency Communication Card template from:

http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4240194_ECCard.pdf

Print a copy for each family member and laminate it with clear packing tape. Put copies:

- in every purse, backpack, or briefcase
- in the car
- in a place accessible by caregivers.
- attached to all of your pet carriers and emergency leashes

If you aren't able to print at home, you can also download and print these cards at any Berkeley Public Library, or you can pick up a copy at the Public Safety Building, 2011 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, 2nd Floor.

Fire Prevention

5. Locate Your Gas Shut-Off.



Free/
Low-cost



Easy

In an earthquake, gas lines may be broken, causing hazardous leaks. PG&E advises you to turn off the gas **only** if you smell gas or suspect a leak, or if there is an active fire nearby. All residents should learn how to shut off gas for their home.

TO DO NOW:

- Locate gas shut-off valve for your home; see <http://www.pge.com/myhome/edusafety/gaselectricsafety/turngasoff/>.
- Do **not** turn off your gas, but ensure that a tool (wrench) to turn off the gas is in an accessible location near the shut-off valve.
- Contact your nearest neighbors and show them where your gas shut-off and tool to turn off the gas are. Ask them to show you where their shut-offs are. You never know who will be home when an emergency arises.

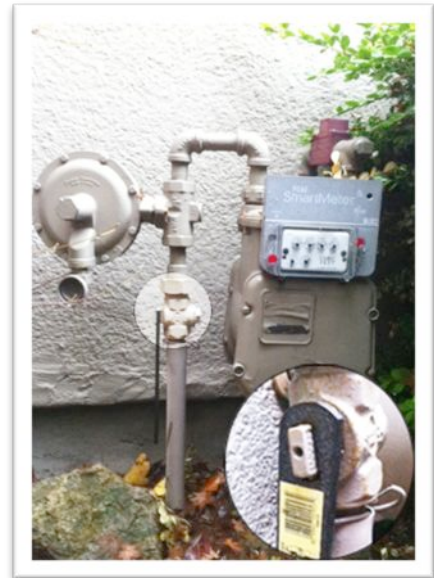


Berkeley Emergency Preparedness Month

October, 2015

- If neighbors have automatic gas shut-off valves talk to them about how they like theirs, where they got it, and what it costs to have one installed.

The City of Berkeley offers free gas shut-off valves to homeowners who take steps to prepare for disasters. Learn more here: <http://cityofberkeley.info/gasshutoff/>.



6. Test Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors.



Free/
Low-cost



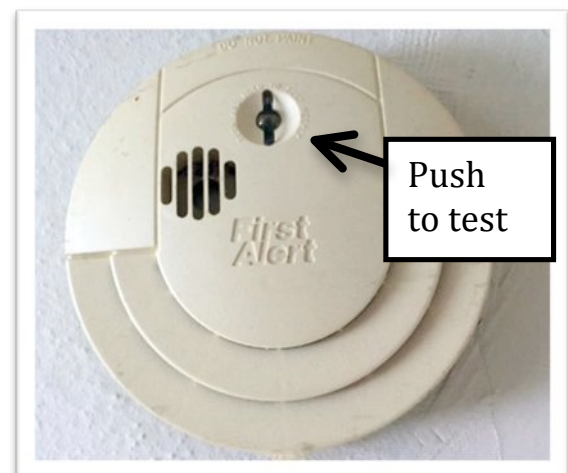
Easy

Take action to keep your household safe and to prevent small fires from growing into large fires.

TO DO NOW:

- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors by pushing the test button on each alarm, or in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Replace batteries in alarms that are not working, or replace the alarm if necessary.
- See also: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/campaigns/smokealarms/alarms/index.shtm>

FEMA recommends changing batteries in your detectors twice a year: at the beginning and at the end of Daylight Savings Time. Replace your batteries now if you don't remember the last time the batteries were replaced. If the detectors are more than 4 or 5 years old, now is probably a good time to replace them.





Staying Informed

7. Sign up for Berkeley Emergency Notification System (BENS).



Free/
Low-cost



Easy

During the October 17th Citywide Exercise, City officials will send a BENS message via **text and email only** to community members who have signed up to receive BENS alerts. In a real emergency, BENS is one of the systems that the City may use to send information and instructions to the community. That's why you want to sign up now!

To sign up for emergency alerts, visit:
<http://www.cityofberkeley.info/BENS>

TO DO NOW:

- Before the October 17 Citywide Emergency Exercise, sign up for BENS.
- On October 17, check for a message from BENS on the phone(s) and email(s) that you signed up on the website.

Every Berkeley Public Library offers internet access you can use to sign up for BENS. Or, call the Office of Emergency Services to sign up at 510-981-5544 or 510-981-5544 (TTY/TDD).

Disaster Supplies

8. Fill Empty Freezer Space With Water Bottles.



Free/
Low-cost



Easy

Every time you open your freezer, cold air in empty spaces rushes out. Bottles of frozen water in your freezer will:

- keep frozen food cold longer in a power outage
- give you extra drinking water in an emergency
- make your freezer more efficient *all the time!*

TO DO NOW:

- Fill up some sturdy water bottles with water (leave space at the top for the water to expand)
- Fill any large open spaces in your freezer
- Don't overfill the freezer – leave enough space for air to circulate





9. Put a flashlight and a pair of shoes where each person sleeps.



Free/Low-
cost



Kid-friendly



Easy

There may be a lot of debris and broken glass on the floor after a major earthquake; cut and injured feet are common injuries.

TO DO NOW:

Put a pair of sturdy, closed-toe shoes under or near each person's bed. Put the items together in a container or sack and attach it to the bed so it won't be thrown out of reach in an earthquake.

For children, you can use the last pair of shoes they wore, oversized hand-me-downs, or a thrift store pair and replace it each time they grow out of a new pair. Put a flashlight inside the shoes to make it easy to find if the lights are out.

For adults, you can add useful items such as sturdy work gloves and a crowbar to open jammed doors. If you have a go-bag, this is a great place to store it as well.

10. Start a Disaster Kit Wish List.



Free/
Low-cost



Easy

Here are some good sources for affordable disaster supplies:

- end-of-season sales
- garage sales
- thrift stores
- dollar or 99 cent stores
- creative use of things you already have

Keep your wish list handy for when these opportunities arise.

Here are items that should go on your list. Do you have any of these already?

- Copies of important documents such as birth certificates, adoption papers, and insurance papers
- Vaccination and microchip records for pets; extra pet food
- A supply of prescription medications for all family members and pets (3-day minimum, 14-day recommended)
- An extra pair of eye glasses or contact lenses and cleaning solution if you use them
- Solar-powered, hand-crank, or battery operated radio
- Flashlights and/or lamps and batteries
- Something to keep you from getting bored: cards, books, or games



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- First Aid Kit
- At least three days worth of nonperishable food; water in bottles, cans, or pouches (read the Food and Water Activity Guide for more info)
- Plastic bags for trash and sanitary needs
- Work gloves

A more complete list of disaster kit items can be found here:

<http://ncdisaster.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/handbook.pdf>

TO DO NOW:

Mark the things on the above list that you need, and keep this list in mind when opportunities to buy them affordably come up in the year to come.

Pet Preparedness

11. “If we’re not home...” Pet Buddies.



Free/
Low-cost



Easy

If everyone in your family is away from home during a disaster but your pets are home, who can check to make sure they are OK? Who will take care of them if you are not able to get home soon?

Your best option is a trusted neighbor who already has the keys to your house and comes over to take care of the pets when you’re out of town. This is someone your pets already know, so they are not as likely to run away and hide – or attack – when this friend comes in your door.

TO DO NOW:

- Have a conversation with a trusted neighbor or friend about what might happen in an emergency. Talk to them about where your pets may be hiding, where treats to lure them out are kept, where their carriers/crates are, and where your pets’ disaster supplies are kept.
- If none of your neighbors has your keys, now is the time to choose two neighbors you trust and get in touch with them to make these arrangements.
- Give this person a signed letter authorizing emergency veterinary care for your pets; an example can be found here: <http://www.anapsid.org/acd/pet-limitedpoa.pdf>
- Make sure your neighbor’s contact information is included on your emergency contact cards, as well as in your own mobile device or phone book.



More Affordable Preparedness Tips

1. If you have access to a garden, any food you plant there will be a welcome addition to your disaster food supplies. Trade vegetables and fruits with neighbors for variety.
2. Don't have a hardhat? Use a bicycle helmet. Put the kids' bike helmets on after an earthquake to help protect them during aftershocks.
3. Heavy trash bags can be improvised for many purposes including an emergency toilet, rain gear, or sealing doors to shelter-in-place.
4. Emergency splints can be made from rolled up magazines, newspapers, or cardboard, or chicken wire wrapped in duct tape (no sharp ends!).
5. Torn strips from clean cotton bed sheets can be used as slings, bandages, splint padding, or over sterile gauze for wounds.
6. Putting a bandanna or cotton T-shirt moistened with water over your mouth can reduce irritation from dust and smoke.
7. Band together with neighbors to buy in bulk and get better deals.
8. Instead of buying expensive hand sanitizer, use a cheap bottle of isopropyl rubbing alcohol.
9. Save gallon-size plastic bleach containers. These are sturdy, opaque containers that are good for water storage once well rinsed out.
10. Grab a few extra packets of ketchup and mustard when you go to a fast food restaurant. These handy packets should stay good for three months – or longer in the fridge.
11. Rotate your food regularly and buy a few extra canned items on sale each month to add to your stock.
12. Rather than purchasing a ready-made emergency kit, assemble the items yourself in a backpack or 5-gallon bucket. You'll probably save money, and can select the things you're most likely to need.
13. You can warm light sticks in water to increase their brightness and therefore use fewer of them.
14. If you have pets, when you buy pet food at your local pet store, ask if they have any free samples of dried pet food. These small samples are great to throw into your "pet go bag."